GATT since 1991 to explore the interface between the two areas. This matter is expected to be brought before the Ministerial Conference of the Uruguay Round in April, 1994.

Export and Import of rice

1878. SHRI K.R. MALKANI : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is exporting quality rice and importing inferior rice ; and

(b) the sale price of superior rice and the import price plus freight (ship, road and rail) insurance and storage cost of inferior rice, per tonne ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE, CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED) : (a) and (b) The export of basmati rice is allowed freely and export of superfine non-basmati is allowed subject only an M.E.P. (Minimum Export Price) of US $ 200 per MT. During the period from April 1993 to November 1993, 3,20.908 tons of basmati rice valued at Rs. 648.92 crores and 1,47,520 tons of rice (other than basmati rice) valued at Rs. 126.70 crores were exported and 75,524 tons of rice valued at 55.26 crores have been imported.

(Source : DGCI&S, Calcutta).

Finance to Tobacco Farmers

1879. SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government propose to finance tobacco farmers in Andhra Pradesh to adopt varieties developed by the Central Tobacco Research Institute of Rajahmundry ;

(b) if so. the details of such a scheme ; and

(c) the steps being taken to assist tobacco farmers ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE, CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Measures taken by Tobacco Board to assist the farmers include :

(i) Advising farmers through training programmes/meeting/publicity to adopt improved varieties and package of practices recommended by the Central Tobacco Research Institute.

(ii) Distributing quality seeds produced by Central Tobacco Research Institute and the Indian Leaf Tobacco Division (ILTD) of ITC Limited.

(iii) Tying up financial assistance with banks for growing tobacco.

(iv) Supplying coal at the barn-site for curing tobacco.

(v) Implementing developmental schemes for (a) improving yield and quality of FCV tobacco, (b) improving curing facilities, (c) supply of healthy seedlings. (d) training of farmers, (e) on-farm tests and experimental trials, and (f) development of new areas for FCV tobacco.

(vi) Planning crop size and conducting auction sales of FCV tobacco.

Export of Hybrid Jowar

1880. SHRI SURESH KALMADI : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Government of Maharashtra have approached the Central Government seeking permission to export seven lakh tonnes of hybrid jowar during the current year ; and

(b) if so. what is Government's reaction in respect thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE, CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED) : (a) and (b) It has